REVIEWS

Trees of the California Sierra Nevada. (Backpacker Field Guide Series). By GEORGE A. PETRIDES and OLIVIA PETRIDES. 1996. Explorer Press, Michigan. 80 pages. $9.95, ISBN 0-9646674-0-1.

No backpacker in the mountain range of Sierra Nevada will want to be without his/her *Trees of the California Sierra Nevada* field guide. This handy, lightweight book is small enough to fit easily inside a pants' pocket or even an overpacked backpack. It is very practical and easy to use, especially for the beginning botany student or any person with a slight interest in identification.

The field guide provides guidelines for identifying 95 tree species that grow at anytime of the year in the California Sierra Nevada. The book is divided into five sections based on leaf arrangement, composition, and morphology. Once you have reached the correct section for the tree selected for identification, a non-technical description of the habitat, seed, leaf and flower morphologies and sizes are appropriately provided along with a good illustration of distinct characteristics of the particular tree. Other tree species that are similar to each other are also described together and includes illustrations of each for comparison. Although some pencil drawings of described trees are dark and the details are not very clear, the overall clarity is nicely conveyed and beautifully illustrated.

Occasionally, natural history, medicinal and edible uses are mentioned in the tree descriptions to further intrigue the user. Both scientific and common names are given, although there is emphasis on common names as well as an avoidance of technical terms. This type of presentation will probably be more appealing for the user who is not interested in technicalities, may further invite the user to appreciate the natural world and perhaps increase the desire to learn more about plants.

As best expressed by the author himself, "[the field guide is] a new and simple way to identify and enjoy some of the world's most beautiful and impressive forest trees in a mountain setting of incomparable majesty." I will be sure to bring along my field guide on my next hike so that my non-botanists friends may share in the wonderful experience of identifying the stunning trees in Sierra Nevada mountain.

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The Biophilia Hypothesis. Edited by STEPHEN R. KELLERT and EDWARD O. WILSON. A Shearwater Book, published by Island Press, Washington D.C., 1993, 439 pages. $29.95(cloth), ISBN 1-55963-148-1; $17.95(paper), ISBN 1795-147-3.

As the technological age rolls on, creating undreamed of wonders and conveniences for humanity (or at least for the privileged parts of it), so the natural resources that fuel it are being depleted. The exact cost is not yet known, and there is a wide range of opinion about what the bottom line might be. Unlike the optimism generated by engineers with vision, an understanding of biology, and familiarity with ecological and evolutionary processes tends to give one a rather dark view of the outcome. *The Biophilia Hypothesis* is hopefully one of the lights on the distant horizon for developing a rational approach to what is often seen by our technologically blinkered societies as unqualified progress.

E.O. Wilson is already a recognized and respected thinker engaged in constructing a rationale for biological realism, and biophilia is one of the conceptual tools that he has developed for this purpose. He explored the idea in some detail more that a

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